occupiers of the high-rise buildings to provide fire safety measures.

Extinction of Megapodes

199. SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that megapodes found in the Nicobar Islands are on the brink of extinction; and

(b If so, what steps Government propose to take to save the Indian megapodes from extinction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) (a) A survey to establish the status of the megapode is currently under way in the Nicobar Islands.

(b) There is a proposal to establish a national park to protect the habitat and breeding grounds of the megapode, in the Great Nicobar Island.

Dialogue with TNV

200. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to begin a dialogue with the TNV;

(b) whether any initiative has since been taken in that direction; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c) Government's policy in regard to holding talks with any extremist group in the North East is that it should fulfil the two pre-conditions, namely, (i) It should accept the Constitution of India; and (ii) It should stop its violent activities.

Wealth Tax exemption on bonds

201. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that 10 per cent tax free and 14 per cent public sector bonds as well as 9 per cent tax free and 13 per cent public sector bonds were totally free from Wealth Tax when issued;

(b) whether it is also a fact that by implication the bonds were to remain Wealth Tax free for the full period, i.e. till its maturity;

(c) whether it is also a fact that according to the proposal in the Union Budget for 1988-89 Wealth Tax exemption on the above bonds is only upto a certain limit; and

(d) whether Government propose to remove this anomaly; if so, how ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI) : (a) Assets held by an individual or a Hindu Undivided Family, being debentures issued by a public sector company and notified by the Central Government under clause (xvie) of sub-section (1) of section 5 of the Wealth-tax Act, 1957 are totally exempt from wealth-tax.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Sub-clause (b) of clause 55 of the Finance Bill seeks to impose the overall ceiling of Rs. 5 lakhs contained in sub-section (1A) of section 5 for exemption from net wealth on debentures referred to in sub-clause (xvie) of sub-section (1) of section 5, together with certain other assets.

(d) As it was not the Government's intention to take away an existing benefit, it is proposed to move a clarificatory amendment to clause 55 of the Finance Bill to the effect that only debentures sold by public sector companies on or after 1-6-1988 would be brought within the overall limit of Rs. 5 lakhs contained in sub-section (1A) of section 5.